

demonstrated that he is eminently qualified to serve on our Nation's highest Court, and America is fortunate to have a man of his integrity and intellect willing to serve.

I'm grateful to Judge Alito, his wife, Martha, and the Alito children for their patience and dignity during the process. And I look forward to the Senate voting to confirm Judge Sam Alito as the 110th Justice of the Supreme Court.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on January 27 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 28. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 27 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Revising Budget Amendments for the Department of Veterans Affairs

January 28, 2006

Dear Mr. Speaker:

My Administration is committed to ensuring that our Nation's veterans continue to receive timely and high-quality health care.

On July 14, 2005, I submitted an FY 2006 budget amendment to the Congress of \$1.977 billion to cover increased costs in the Department of Veterans Affairs medical care system. I did not designate the funds as an emergency requirement when I submitted the FY 2006 budget amendment. While I believe this funding should be categorized as part of the VA's base budget, it is critical that this funding be made available to meet veterans' needs. As a result, to provide the needed funds to veterans in a timely manner and consistent with the 2006 Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, Public Law 109-114, I hereby revise that request to designate \$1.225 billion of the amount proposed in that amendment as an emergency requirement. I appreciate your cooperation in working with me to ensure the highest quality of care for our veterans.

Additional information on this action is set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director

of the Office of Management and Budget. The details of the FY 2006 amendment were included in the previous transmittal.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 30.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters

January 30, 2006

The President. I want to thank the members of my Cabinet for being here. We just had a really good discussion about the year 2006. Tomorrow night I'm going to be speaking to the Congress, giving the country my State of the Union Address. I can't tell you how upbeat I am about our future, so long as we're willing to lead.

We talked about how to make sure that America continues to spread the peace and to protect ourselves. I heard from the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of State about very positive initiatives—not only in the Middle East but in the Far East as well. We talked about how to make sure this economy of ours stays the strongest economy in the world and that we recognize we can't just sit back and hope for the best, that we've got to lead. And so we had a good discussion about matters such as health care and energy and education, all of which I'll address tomorrow night.

I'm looking forward to speaking to the country. We've got a lot to be proud of. We've got a lot of work to do. One of the things I will do is call for Congress and the executive branch to have a good, honest dialog but to speak candidly with each other, but to do so in a way that brings credit to the process. And I'll do my best to elevate the tone here in Washington, DC, so we can work together to achieve big things for the American people.

I'll answer a couple of questions. Nedra Pickler [Associated Press].